

A scenic landscape at sunset. The sky is a vibrant mix of orange, red, and purple. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over a range of misty, blue-toned mountains. In the foreground, there is a field of green grass with several bright blue flowers and patches of reddish-brown vegetation. The overall mood is peaceful and majestic.

# Time to Commence the Sabbath

Adrian Ebens



Time to Commence the Sabbath  
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The Sabbath is one of the pillars of Adventism. It is the gift of rest from Jesus to His followers and plays a key role in the sealing of the 144000. The spirit of the wicked one is always seeking to change times and law, and the Sabbath is no exception. Thankfully Scripture and Spirit of Prophecy are clear of when we should keep the Sabbath. There is vital information in this booklet for the saints who have ears to hear. May we come to the Sabbath when our Saviour calls to receive the precious rest that He has for us and that we may rest in the bosom of Jesus as He rests in the bosom of the Father.

In faith, hope, and love.  
Adrian Ebens

# Contents

Sabbath Controversy.....	4
The Sabbath Begins at Even .....	8
What Didn't Ellen White Understand? .....	9
The Death and Resurrection of Jesus.....	12
The Gospel in Creation.....	18
The Sabbath and the Gospel .....	26
The Midnight Cry.....	27
Egyptians Began Day at Dawn.....	28
Spirit of Prophecy Witness.....	28
Time to Commence the Sabbath .....	31
Evening and Morning .....	31
Defining the Word <i>Day</i> .....	32
Responding to Matt 28:1 and Day at Sunrise .....	34
When Exactly is Evening?.....	36
The Division of 12 Hours in a Day .....	38
An Hour is 1/12 of Daylight and not 60 Minutes .....	39
Sabbath Cannot Commence at 6pm .....	42
Time of the Sabbath.....	43
The Lunar Sabbath .....	44
The Continuous Seven Day Cycle .....	44
Babylonian Origin of Lunar Sabbath .....	46
The Gregorian Calendar .....	47
We Know Where We Stand .....	49
From Sunset to Sunset in Your Location .....	51

## Sabbath Controversy

At the heart of the Ten Commandments we are invited to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. What exactly is the Sabbath *day* and when does it begin and end?

This question became quite an issue for the early Seventh-day Adventist movement as different practices began to develop in different locations. James White recounted this history in the Review and Herald in 1868.

It is generally known to most of the readers of the REVIEW, that for several years in the early history of Seventh-day Adventists, believers adopted six o'clock p.m. as the time for the Sabbath to commence and close. It is also known that in the autumn of 1855, the Review taught that sunset was the Bible time to commence the Sabbath, and that our people generally changed from six o'clock to sunset. Some of the circumstances connected with this change I wish here to state:

1. The six o'clock time was called in question by a portion of the believers as early as 1847, **some maintaining that the Sabbath commenced at sunrise, while others claimed Bible evidence in favor of sunset.**

2. Elder J.B., who was the first to teach the Sabbath in its importance, and faithfully labor to bring out a people from among the Adventists to observe it, was very decided upon the question, and respect for his years, and his godly life, might have been among the reasons why this point was not sooner investigated as thoroughly as some other points.

3. In the autumn of 1855, Elder J.N.A. called on me at Battle Creek, on his way to Iowa, and set before me the scriptural reasons for commencing the Sabbath at sunset. He had written a clear article upon the subject, which he left with me, and which appeared in the Review for December 4, 1855. This article, however, before it appeared in the Review was read at the Conference at Battle Creek about that time, and the subject was discussed, resulting in settling the minds of the brethren on the sunset-time, with the exception of Bro. B. and a few others. Since that time there has been general agreement among us upon the subject.

But there are persons who seek to injure us as a people - and this class

we hope to help by this article - who report and publish to the world that Mrs. White did profess to be shown that the time to commence the Sabbath was six o'clock, and that at a later period she was shown that sunset was the true time. It is also stated that in vision she saw the dial-plate of a clock with one hand pointing to the 6, and other to 12, showing that six o'clock was the commencement and close of the Sabbath.

A simple statement of the facts in the case are sufficient to show these reports false. Hence we give the following statements, which we are ready to prove by most competent witnesses:

1. Mrs. White has in two visions been shown something in regard to the time of the commencement of the Sabbath. The first was as early as 1847, at Topsham, Me. **In the vision she was shown that to commence the Sabbath at sunrise was wrong. She then heard an angel repeat these words, "From even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbaths."** Bro B. was present and succeeded in satisfying all present that "even" was six o'clock. Mark this: **The vision at Topsham did not teach the six o'clock time. It only corrected sunrise time.** I never received the idea that the six o'clock time was sustained by the visions, hence the following which I copy from a statement I made in the Review upon the subject, December 4, 1855, as follows:

We have never been fully satisfied with the testimony presented in favor of six o'clock, **while the various communications received for a few years past advocating both sunrise and sunset time, have been almost destitute of argument, and the spirit of humility and candor. The subject has troubled us, yet we have never found time to thoroughly investigate it.**

In June, 1854, we urged Elder D.P.H. to prepare an article on the subject for the Review. When with him in Pennsylvania, last winter, we repeated the request. When in Maine, last summer, we stated our feelings on this subject to Bro. A., and our fears of division unless the question could be settled by good testimony. He decided to devote his time to the subject till he ascertained what the Bible taught in regard to it, and his article in this number is the result of his investigation. Some have the impression that six o'clock time has been taught among us by the direct manifestation of the Holy Spirit. This is a mistake;

'From even unto even' was the teaching from which six o'clock time has been inferred.' "

2. In regard to the clock-face, twenty competent witnesses are ready to testify that neither Mrs. W. nor her visions had anything to do with it whatever.

3. We were present at the Conference referred to above, and also when **the vision was given after the close of that Conference**, and heard Sr. W. soon after coming out of vision, relate what she had seen. We are therefore prepared to testify that sunset-time was not once mentioned in the vision; but the words given to her in the previous vision were repeated, namely, "From even to even shall ye celebrate your Sabbath;" and these words were now added: "Take the word of God, read it, understand, and ye cannot err. Read carefully, and ye shall there find what even is and when it is." In the first vision we were directed to the word of God by the words "From even to even;" but on astronomical grounds, it was then decided that even was six o'clock. In the second, exactly the same words were used, **and we were more especially directed to the word of God, which when examined conclusively establishes sunset time. This settled the matter with Bro. B. and a few others, and general harmony has since prevailed on the question.** James White, RH Feb 25, 1868

In 1847 Ellen White was shown in vision that the idea of the Sabbath beginning at sunrise was wrong. The angel then quoted Lev 23:32 to Ellen White while addressing the subject of the commencement of the Sabbath. So the angel linked the phrase *even to even* to the time to keep the weekly Sabbath. As James White points out, Joseph Bates convinced everyone at the time that *even to even* meant 6pm to 6pm. The first vision ruled out that sunrise was the time to keep the Sabbath. When J.N. Andrews provided his research that clearly showed that *even to even* from the Bible means sunset, every one accepted the evidence except two.

As the paper was read that Sabbath morning, it could be seen that while the six o'clock time advocated by Bates was in principle not incorrect—for it called for beginning the Sabbath in the evening—in detail there was an error. Now with the position of sunset time so amply supported by Scripture evidence, all the congregation, which included the church's

leaders, readily accepted the light and were prepared to shift their practice. All, that is, but two—Joseph Bates and Ellen White. {1BIO 323.2}

A few days after the conference Ellen White then had the second vision. At the close of the conference all were convinced of the Bible truth except Joseph Bates and Ellen White.

I saw it was even so, "From even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbath." Said the angel, **"Take the word of God, read it, understand, and ye cannot err. Read carefully, and ye shall there find what even is, and when it is."** I asked the angel if the frown of God had been upon his people for commencing the Sabbath as they have. I was directed back to the first rise of the Sabbath. I followed the people of God up to this time, and did not see that God was displeased, or frowned upon them. **I inquired why it had been [4] thus, that at this late day we must change the time of commencing the Sabbath. Said the angel, "Ye shall understand, but not yet, not yet."** Said the angel, "If light comes, and that light is set aside, or rejected, then comes condemnation and the frown of God; but before the light comes there is no sin, for there is no light for them to reject." I saw that it was in the minds of some that the Lord had shown that the Sabbath commenced at six o'clock, when I had only seen that it commenced at "even," and it was inferred that even was at six. I saw the servants of God must draw together, press together. 1T 116

The vision came *for the benefit of Joseph Bates and Ellen White*. She was instructed to read the Scriptures carefully. This is exactly what J.N. Andrews had done and shown conclusively when the *even* takes place in Scripture and that is at sunset. The brethren then studied carefully Elder Andrews study and saw the evidence was clear in Scripture. As James White concluded:

In the second, exactly the same words were used, and we were more especially directed to the word of God, **which when examined conclusively establishes sunset time. This settled the matter with Bro. B. and a few others, and general harmony has since prevailed on the question.** James White, RH Feb 25, 1868

So what was the point that the believers needed to understand that they did

not at the time? James White continues:

But the question naturally arises, If the visions are given to correct the erring, why did she not sooner see the error of the six o'clock time? **It does not appear to be the design of the Lord to teach his people by the gifts of the Spirit on Bible questions until his servants have diligently searched his word.** When this was done upon the subject of time to commence the Sabbath, and most were established, and some were in danger of being out of harmony with the body on this subject, then, yes, then, was the very time for God to magnify his goodness in the manifestation of the gift of his Spirit in the accomplishment of its proper work. The sacred Scriptures are given us as the rule of faith and duty, and we are commanded to search them. If we fail to understand and fully obey the truths in consequences of not searching the Scriptures as we should, or a want of consecration and spiritual discernment, and God in mercy in his own time corrects us by some manifestation of the gifts of his Holy Spirit, instead of murmuring that he did not do it before, let us humbly acknowledge his mercy, and praise him for his infinite goodness in condescending to correct us at all. **Let the gifts have their proper place in the church. God has never set them in the very front, and commanded us to look to them to lead us in the path of truth, and the way to Heaven. His word he has magnified.** The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are man's lamp to light up his path to the kingdom. Follow that. But if you err from Bible truth, and are in danger of being lost, it may be that God will in time of his choice correct you, and bring you back to the Bible and save you. And would it become you in such a case to murmur and say, 'Lord, why didst thou not do this before?' Take care! 'Be still, and know that I am God.' Our necessity is his opportunity to teach us by the gifts of the Holy Spirit."

So this situation was a reminder to all the Pioneers to make the study of the Scriptures the centre of their faith for the Spirit of Prophecy will not do this. The Spirit of Prophecy will confirm truth and lead men to the Scriptures to find it but will not teach truth ahead of the Scriptures.

## **The Sabbath Begins at Even**

Lev 22:6,7 The soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until **even**, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water. **And when the sun is down**, he shall be clean, and shall



afterward eat of the holy things, because it is his food.

When putting together parallel stories in the gospels the same evidence appears. In two stories it uses the word *even* and the other gospel uses the word *sunset* to once again show that *even* means *sunset*.

Matt 8:16. **When the even was come**, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick.

Mark 1:32. **And at even**, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

Luke 4:40. **Now when the sun was setting**, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

## What Didn't Ellen White Understand?

Ellen White was puzzled as to why they must change now when to her it was so late in the day.

I inquired why it had been thus, that at this late day we must change the time of commencing the Sabbath. Said the angel, "Ye shall understand, but not yet, not yet. 1T 116

The thing that Ellen White did not understand was why they have to change the time and the angel said they would not understand the reason why they had to change. However, as the angel indicated that later they – meaning her and those with her – would understand. Some have suggested what they did not understand was the time to commence the Sabbath but this is not true at all. Ellen White was told she would understand why they had to change but not at that very time.

The last part of this booklet contains the careful research of J.N. Andrews. This study shows clearly that creation began in the darkness of day one. God created the void and formless earth in the darkness of day one. Then he commanded the light and divided it from the existing darkness of the former

12 hours. He also explains the two definitions of the word *day* and the word *evening* in Scripture that will help to address several calendar issues that have been raised in relation to understanding terms like *on the morrow* or *the next day*. For the moment we want to focus on the construction of the first day of creation and especially its connection to the word evening.

One example of this is given in Lev 23:32 where we are told that the Day of Atonement commences in the ninth day of the month at even. As we noted there are two understandings for the word *day* and there are also two understandings for the time of *even*. I quote from J.N. Andrews:

The margins reads, "between the two evenings." This purports to be the literal Hebrew, and is therefore entitled to respect. It is said, that "between the two evenings" is at 3 o'clock P. M. If this is correct, it shows that the "going down of the sun," in Deut 16:6, is an indefinite expression. But Gesenius, in his Hebrew Lexicon, says that between the two evenings, according to the "best supported" opinion, "was the interval between sunset and dark." If this be correct - and there is certainly no higher uninspired authority than Gesenius - it removes the apparent contradiction between Ex 12 and Deut 16, and shows that they both agree on sunset.

With this understanding it is the *even* that occurs *IN* the ninth day (of 12 hours) rather than the evening *OF* the ninth day (of 24 hours) which would be the night before. This is the evening leading into the beginning of the tenth day. We notice:

**Evening:** The period following sunset with which the Jewish day began (Gen\_1:5; Mar\_13:35). The Hebrews reckoned two evenings of each day, as appears from Exo\_16:12 : Exo\_30:8; Exo\_12:6 (marg.); Lev\_23:5 (marg. R.V., "between the two evenings"). **The "first evening" was that period when the sun was verging towards setting,** and the "second evening" the moment of actual sunset. *Easton Bible Dictionary* – Evening.

So the Scriptures give two definitions for the word *day* and two for the word *even*. The context will determine which applies. The Bible is clear that the Day of Atonement is only one day and that it is from *even to even* and it is the

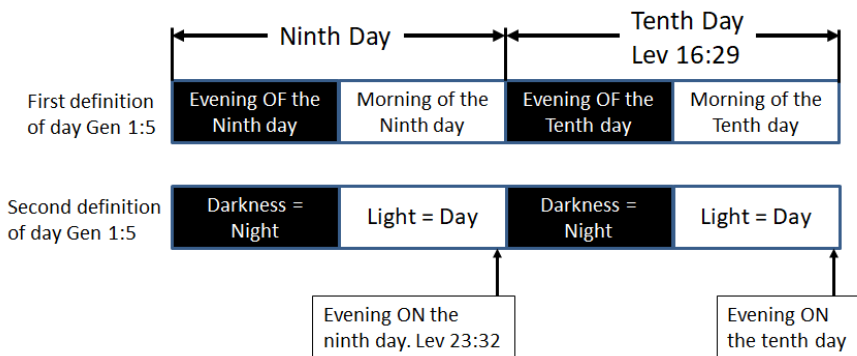
tenth day.

Lev 16:29 And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, **on the tenth day of the month**, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:

But the Scripture tells us to commence the day of atonement on the evening of the ninth day.

Lev 23:32 It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: **in the ninth day of the month at even**, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

If we take the term “ninth day of the month at even” to mean the period of darkness before the daylight of the ninth day then we would have the Day of Atonement turn into the days of atonement. This obviously is not correct because the Day of Atonement is one day. So the term “in the ninth day” is referring to the daylight hours of the ninth day of the month. The Israelites were to be well prepared on the daylight hours of the ninth day for the start of the Day of Atonement that started at the sunset of that ninth day. So it is the evening that occurs **IN** or **ON** the ninth day.



As we noted above, the first definition of *evening* was the period when the sun was verging towards setting. We see this principle in Nehemiah 13:19 when they shut the gates **ON** the sixth day when the sun was about to set for

the commencement OF the seventh day.

Neh 13:19 And it came to pass, that **when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut**, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day.

The words *began to be dark* in Hebrew means *shade or shadow*. This means the gates were shut as the evening shadows began to touch the gates of the city. This is further supported by the following verses.

Eze 46:1-2 Thus saith the Lord GOD; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but **on the sabbath it shall be opened**, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened. (2) And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; **but the gate shall not be shut until the evening**.

The instruction concerning the temple service was that the temple gates were to be open on the Sabbath and the New Moon. When were the gates shut again? They were shut at evening. This means that Sabbath ended in the evening.

## The Death and Resurrection of Jesus

The events related to the death and resurrection of Jesus provides many clues as to the commencement of the Sabbath.

Luke 23:50-54 And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just: (51) (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. (52) This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. (54) And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

Jesus died at 3pm on Friday afternoon the preparation day, Mark 15:34-37.

The year of Christ's death was AD 31.

In the spring of A. D. 31, Christ the true sacrifice was offered on Calvary. DA 233

From astronomical calculations, it has been determined that the conjunction in AD 31 was April 10 of that year. Many assume from this that the Passover must have been Wednesday April 25 of that year. This is done by simply adding one day to give the first sighting of the New Moon. However the sighting of the New moon is not regular like the conjunction. It is affected by a number of factors. It can range from one to three days. From the astronomical data gathered by the US Naval Observatory in Washington D.C. we see that the transition time from the conjunction or dark moon until the first visible sighting was three days.

Thus with the 3 day transition, the date of the Passover was Friday April 27 in AD 31. From these simple facts we see that indeed the crucifixion took place on the sixth day of the week being Friday.

232

## JOURNAL OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE

FIRST CENTURY MOONS AND INTERVALS TABLE I  
(Jerusalem Civil Time)

	A. D.	Conjunction	1 Nisan	Day of Week	Tr. Period (Days)	Full Moon	14 Nisan	Waxing Period (Days)	Year Length (Days)
Crucifixion Period	28*	Apr 13.68	— Apr 15	Thur	1.09	Apr 27.62	Apr 28	13.94	— 355
	29	Apr 2.82	— Apr 5	Tues	1.95	Apr 17.21	Apr 18	14.39	— 355
	30	Mar 22.84	— Mar 26	Sun	2.92	Apr 6.93	Apr 8	15.09	— 384
	31*	Apr 10.58	— Apr 14	Sat	3.19	Apr 25.94	Apr 27	15.36	— 354
	32	Mar 29.95	— Apr 2	Wed	2.81	Apr 14.47	Apr 15	15.52	— 384
	33*	Apr 17.90	— Apr 21	Tues	2.87	May 3.29	May 4	15.39	— 354
	34	Apr 7.58	— Apr 10	Sat	2.19	Apr 22.40	Apr 23	14.82	— 354

6639

These facts both confirm the Spirit of Prophecy statements that it was a Friday and prove false the claim that the crucifixion took place on a Wednesday of that year.

Joseph of Arimathaea asked Pilate to be able to take the body of Jesus down and lay it in his new tomb. Some of the women followed Joseph to see where

Jesus was taken and then went home and kept the Sabbath.

Luke 23:55-56 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. (56) And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.

The Spirit of Prophecy confirms that the death of Christ was on Friday the sixth day of the week.

At last Jesus was at rest. The long day of shame and torture was ended. **As the last rays of the setting sun ushered in the Sabbath, the Son of God lay in quietude in Joseph's tomb.** His work completed, His hands folded in peace, He rested through the sacred hours of the Sabbath day. {DA 769.1}

Trouble seemed crowding upon trouble. **On the sixth day of the week they had seen their Master die; on the first day of the next week they found themselves deprived of His body,** and they were accused of having stolen it away for the sake of deceiving the people. DA 764

The body of Jesus was placed in the tomb before sunset on Friday. The setting of the sun ushers in the Sabbath hours. Jesus rests in the tomb from just before sunset on Friday until just before dawn on Sunday. The women came very early in the morning. In fact they came at dawn.

Luke 24:1-2 Now upon the first day of the week, **very early in the morning**, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. (2) And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

The term very early in the morning translated from Greek is *deep, profound* or *very early dawn*. When they came Jesus had already been raised from the dead. This means that Jesus was raised in the darkness before dawn because the women came at the earliest part of the dawn. John also provides this detail.

John 20:1 The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, **when it was yet dark**, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

## Matthew expresses it this way

Matt 28:1 In the end of the sabbath, as it **began** to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

So when Mary came to the tomb it was still dark. Matthew says at the beginning of the dawn. If we compare this with Luke 24:1 which states very early in the dawn so this means Mary had come at the earliest possible time of the dawn. Yet Jesus had risen from the grave before this because when she came He had already risen. Ellen White provides this commentary.

**The night of the first day of the week had worn slowly away. The darkest hour, just before daybreak, had come.** Christ was still a prisoner in His narrow tomb. The great stone was in its place; the Roman seal was unbroken; the Roman guards were keeping their watch. And there were unseen watchers. Hosts of evil angels were gathered about the place. Had it been possible, the prince of darkness with his apostate army would have kept forever sealed the tomb that held the Son of God. But a heavenly host surrounded the sepulcher. Angels that excel in strength were guarding the tomb, and waiting to welcome the Prince of life. **"And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven."** Clothed with the panoply of God, this angel left the heavenly courts. The bright beams of God's glory went before him, and illuminated his pathway. "His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men." DA 779

At the death of Jesus the soldiers had beheld the earth wrapped in darkness at midday; but **at the resurrection they saw the brightness of the angels illuminate the night**, and heard the inhabitants of heaven singing with great joy and triumph: Thou hast vanquished Satan and the powers of darkness; Thou hast swallowed up death in victory! DA 780.2

The women who had stood by the cross of Christ waited and watched for the hours of the Sabbath to pass. **On the first day of the week, very early, they made their way to the tomb**, taking with them precious spices to anoint the Saviour's body. DA 788.1

At the darkest hour of the night, the angel came and called Christ forth from the grave. Ellen White indicates that this night of the resurrection was the night of the first day of the week. This detail is important because of the prediction of Jesus on a number of occasions.

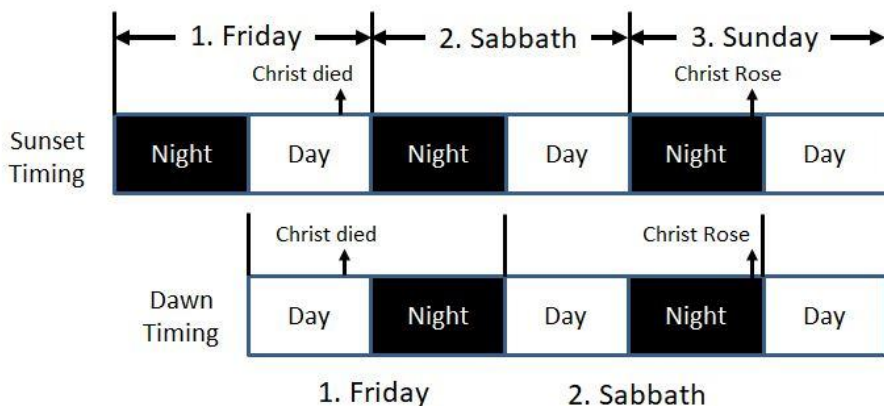
Matt 16:21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be **raised again the third day**.

Matt 17:23 And they shall kill him, **and the third day he shall be raised again**. And they were exceeding sorry.

Matt 20:19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and **the third day** he shall rise again.

For those who advocate the dawn Sabbath, Christ does not rise on the third day but at the end of the second day. Mary came at the earliest possible time of the dawn on Sunday but Christ had already risen at the darkest hour of the night just before dawn.

There is one text that did puzzle me at first and that is the meaning of Luke 23:54 where it says the Sabbath *drew on*. The word drew on means *dawn*. So Luke says the Sabbath dawned. This word is only used twice in the New Testament. The other usage is in Matt 28:1 which speaks of *dawning* towards the first day of the week. In Luke 23:55 the women follow the body of Jesus



to its resting place and then keep the Sabbath according to the



commandment. As we have noted *Desire of Ages* indicates that Sabbath began at sunset. The leaders of the nation wanted Jesus dead before sunset because it was going to be a high Sabbath.

John 19:31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

If the followers of Jesus had buried Jesus during the time of what the Jewish nation kept as the Sabbath, it would have provided the perfect evidence they needed to expose Christ and His followers as law breakers. There is no mention in the New Testament of any such contention about the timing of the Sabbath in the New Testament. Josephus tell us that during the time of Christ that Sabbath was kept from evening to evening.

...and the last was erected above the top of the Pastophoria, where one of the priests stood of course, and gave a signal beforehand with a trumpet, **at the beginning of every seventh day, in the evening twilight, as also at the evening when that day was finished**, as giving notice to the people when they were to stop work, and when they were to go to work again. *Wars of the Jews* Volume 4 page 582

Archaeologists made a discovery to validate what Josephus recorded.

The stone had been toppled during the Roman destruction of the Temple onto the street below where it had lain for nearly two thousand years until we uncovered it. It must have originally come from the pinnacle of the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount. From a spot on top of the Temple chambers a priest would blow a trumpet on Sabbath Eve, to announce the arrival of the Sabbath and the cessation of all labour, and to announce, on the following evening, the departure of the Sabbath and the resumption of all labour. The entire city was visible from this spot on the southwest corner of the Temple Mount; the clarion call of the trumpet would reach the farthest markets of the city. Such a scene is recounted by Josephus in his work, *The Jewish War*. (IV, 582). Editor, H. S. 2004; 2004. BAR 06:04 (July/Aug 1980). Biblical Archaeology Society

So Josephus confirms the fact that the Jewish nation at that time kept

Sabbath from sunset to sunset and this is why they hastened to get Jesus off the cross before sunset. What about the reference to *dawn* in Luke 23:54? The text says that it was the Sabbath that dawned not the sun. The root word for dawned is used in another place in this way.

Eph 5:14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee **light**. [G2017]

This Greek word can convey the idea of a thought dawning into the mind not only dawning of physical light. The context of the burial of Jesus and the actions of the women in harmony with the common practice of Israel at that time all point to the fact that Sabbath commences at sunset and the dawning was the Sabbath and not the sun.

## The Gospel in Creation

We mentioned briefly before about the first day of creation. The position of the Dawn Sabbath commencement states that the command “Let there be light,” is the beginning of the creation week. Yet the Bible says that the heavens and the earth were created in six days.

Exo 20:11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

If the first act of the creation is the creation of light then we have no explanation for when the formless earth and the waters on the earth were created.

Gen 1:1-2 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. (2) And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

This formless earth, the waters and even the darkness that existed were created on the first day because the whole creation took place in six days. The words formless and void do not mean that they did not exist for the same Hebrew words are used in Jeremiah 4:23-26. These verses clearly show that the earth existed in this state.

Jeremiah 4:23-25 I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and

void; and the heavens, and they had no light. (24) I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. (25) I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled.

The darkness was not simply nothingness, the darkness was created as part of day one of creation.

**When God had made our world, and darkness was upon the face of the deep**, he said, Let there be light, and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good. Shall we close our houses, and exclude from them the light which God has pronounced good? ML 139

The Spirit of Prophecy says “When God made our world and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” The term *when* tells us of a point in time that the creation began and that darkness was on the face of the deep. Then God said let there be light. This sequence is also revealed in the book of Job when God spoke to him about the creation of the world.

Job 38:2-12 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? (3) Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. (4) **Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?** declare, if thou hast understanding. (5) Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? (6) Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; (7) When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? (8) Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? (9) **When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it,** (10) And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, (11) And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? (12) **Hast thou commanded the morning [boquer] since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place;**

We see in verse 4 that God laid the foundations of the earth. Verse 9 speaks of the earth wrapped in darkness like a swaddling band. A swaddling band is a cloth to wrap around a new born child. After God laid the foundations of the earth on day one of creation the earth was wrapped in darkness as a

birth cloth. Then in verse 12 God commands the morning or boqer which is the same word in Gen 1:5 for morning. So we see the sequence of creation

1. God laid the foundations of the earth (verse 4)
2. The earth was wrapped in darkness (verse 9)
3. God then commanded the dawn (verse 12)

The book of Job was written at the same time as Genesis and provides for us a clear commentary of the sequence of Genesis chapter 1.

With respect to Genesis 1:5 those who advocate the dawn start of the day say that the words *ereb* (evening) and *Boqer* (morning) only refer to these specific periods of the day. Those who understand the sunset start to the day understand evening to have a broader meaning. It can also mean night. The word *boqer* can also include morrow or the daylight hours. So then it read that the night and the morrow or daylight hours were the first day.

One of the definitions of the word ereb is night. See the ways that it is translated in the King James

The KJV translates Strong's H6153 in the following manner: even (72x), evening (47x), **night** (4x), mingled (2x), people (2x), eventide (2x), eveningtide (with H6256) (2x), Arabia (1x), days (1x), even (with H996) (1x), evening (with H3117) (1x), evening (with H6256) (1x), eventide (with H6256) (1x).

The word Ereb has a root H6150 arab word that means “to grow dark” “to become evening.” H6153 can also mean night as translated in verses like this

Psa 30:5 For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life:  
weeping may endure for a **night**, H6153 but joy cometh in the morning.  
H1242 Boqer.

These verses provide a broader understanding of ereb than simply the twilight zone.

What then is the significance of this creation of darkness? When we look at the word used we see the following:

From H2821; the dark; hence (literally) darkness; figuratively misery, destruction, death, ignorance, sorrow, wickedness: - dark (-ness), night, obscurity.

The darkness had a spiritual meaning. In a physical context there was nothing wrong with literal darkness. Yet God only pronounced the light as good.

Gen 1:4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

What is Moses seeking to tell us when writing the Genesis story? Is he only speaking to us of physical origins or is He teaching us the gospel through the creation story also? Did Moses understand the gospel?

1 Pet 1:10-11 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: (11) Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

Those prophets included Moses and through Moses the gospel was preached to Israel.

Heb 4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: [Israel] but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Paul picks up the Gospel in creation in the following verses.

Rom 1:16-20 **For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation** to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. (17) For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. (18) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; (19) Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. (20) **For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:**

2 Cor 4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Paul also uses the language of the creation in the Psalms to speak of the gospel.

Rom 10:15-18 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, **How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!** (16) But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? (17) So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (18) But I say, **Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.**

Paul partly quotes from Psalms 19 speaking of how the heavens and the earth speak of the glory of God.

Psa 19:1-4 . **The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.** (2) Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. (3) There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. (4) **Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.** In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

E.J Waggoner picks up on this truth through his little book called the Gospel in Creation.

The declaration of the apostle, that the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Romans 1:16), is familiar to all who have ever heard the gospel preached. The gospel is the manifestation of God's power put forth to save men. The same thing is stated in substance by the apostle Peter when he speaks of the inheritance reserved in heaven for those "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (1 Peter 1:5).

CREATION, THE MEASURE OF GOD'S POWER: But what is the measure of the power of God? Wherein is it seen in a tangible form? Read Romans 1:20, where we are told that ever since the creation of the world, the invisible things of God, even His eternal power and Godhead, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. It is in creation, therefore, that the power of God is to be seen by everybody. But the power of God in the line of salvation is the gospel. **Therefore the works of creation teach the gospel.** E.J Waggoner, Gospel in Creation pages 9, 10

So Moses was preaching the Gospel through the creation story. We can be confident of this because of the light that shone in his face when he came down from the mountain.

While Moses was in the mount, God presented to him, not only the tables of the law, but also the plan of salvation. He saw that the sacrifice of Christ was pre-figured by all the types and symbols of the Jewish age; **and it was the heavenly light streaming from Calvary, no less than the glory of the law of God, that shed such a radiance upon the face of Moses.** PP 330

So the darkness that was created on the first day of creation was a visible symbol of a spiritual reality that was taking place at that present time. Misery, destruction and death were present in the universe through the accusations of Lucifer against God. Satan placed darkness over God's character by attributing to our Father lies and falsehood that He was harsh and unforgiving. Christ would be the one to reveal the true light of the Father's character.

Satan had misrepresented the Father. He had pictured him as a being full of revenge, who had no forbearance, no mercy, no patience, no love. He clothed him with his own attributes; RH April 30, 1889

Satan had convinced nearly half of the angels that God could not be trusted but Christ and His angels brought the light of God's character to many of these angels and the number of Satan's followers was reduced to one third.

Satan exultingly pointed to his sympathizers, comprising nearly one half of all the angels, and exclaimed, These are with me! 1SP 22

Revelation 12:4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth:

The darkness on the first day was a symbol of the darkness that Satan had placed around God's character. The Bible says that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all, John 1:5. Christ is the brightness of the Father's glory, Heb 1:3 and therefore the events of the first day of creation tell the story of how Christ would dispel the darkness that encircled our Father's character through Satan's lies.

Psalm 18:11-12 He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. (12) At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire.

Exodus 20:21 And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

The thick darkness is a visible expression of the misapprehension of God's character. God who commanded the light to shine in darkness has shined in our hearts in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor 4:6. This is the gospel in the first day of Creation.

He causes "the light to shine out of darkness." 2 Corinthians 4:6. When "the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep," "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. **And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.**" Genesis 1:2, 3. **So in the night of spiritual darkness, God's word goes forth, "Let there be light."** To His people He says, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Isaiah 60:1. {COL 415.1}

This first day of creation was already a reality for between nearly one half and a third of the angels. Christ revealed the true character of the Father because He is the Word of God and no one including angels can approach the Father without Christ. The darkness in Satan and his angels left their first estate (Jude 1:6) and when Adam and Eve sinned that darkness came to this world.

**The earth was dark through misapprehension of God.** That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan's deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government. DA 22

The sequence of the lies of Satan producing darkness and the light in the face of Christ dispelling the darkness follow a clear sequence of night followed by day. We notice that when darkness falls on the earth that men go to sleep, which is a symbol of death. When the sun of righteousness arises in the sky, men are resurrected from sleep to the newness of the day. Every day of our lives reflects this darkness and light battle concerning the character of God.



When we come under the shadow of darkness then we sleep – this sleep is a symbol of death.

The sequence of night and day through the six days of creation culminates in the seventh day. We note carefully that the seventh day does not mention anything about the evening and morning being the seventh day. The Bible says that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years and at the end of the six thousand years we read:

Rev 21:25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

Rev 22:5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

As each night symbolically brings misery and woe so each day brings a greater revelation of the light of God's character. In the deep darkness of the world under the dominion of Rome in the First century, Christ came as a light and lit every man coming into the world. He was a fit symbol of the light of the sun that came on the fourth day of Creation even as Christ appeared at the end of the fourth millennium. After the brightness of the Apostles came the darkness of the Roman Empire followed by the light of the reformation followed by the darkness of the Counter Reformation and the rise of humanism. In these final days the darkness from the wickedness of this world will receive the light of the fourth angel that will lighten the earth with its glory. Then Christ shall come and we shall enter the Sabbath rest and there shall be no more night and day. The creation week tells the gospel story of the history of the world for this is the pattern of the revelation of the light of truth.

If we would introduce the notion that the day begins with light and ends with night the whole principle of the gospel in creation is destroyed because the story does not end in darkness but in light. This principle is also supported by the birth principle. A child remains in the darkness of the womb until it is born into the light of day. It also is reflected in the covenants in which the darkness and misery of the old covenant gives way to the light of the new covenant. In the context of the gospel, everything finishes with the light.

The gospel is intimately connected with the transition of darkness to light.

1 John 2:8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

2 Cor 4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

## The Sabbath and the Gospel

We mentioned earlier that Moses wrote the creation story with the gospel in mind. The creation story is telling us the story of redemption. In this context we see that the Sabbath is intimately linked to the gospel.

Eze 20:12 Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them.

Heb 4:2-4 For unto us was **the gospel preached**, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. (3) **For we which have believed do enter into rest**, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. (4) For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And **God did rest the seventh day from all his works**.

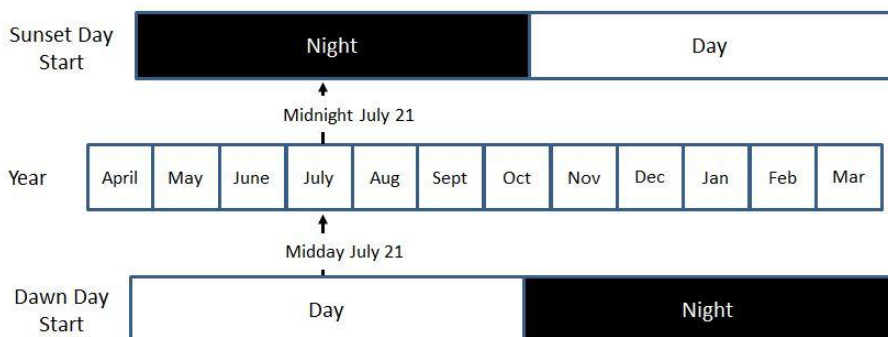
Entering into Sabbath rest is an expression of entering into Gospel rest. The Sabbath is the sign or miracle of the process of sanctification in the gospel. This process does not end in darkness, it ends in the light. When we see the Sabbath directly connected to the gospel as shown above then all the processes of the gospel are applied to the Sabbath.

1. Man is in darkness and sin. Isa 60:2; Gen 1:2
2. The Spirit of God moves upon the heart of man and draws him to the light. John 6:44, Gen 1:2
3. When Christ comes into the heart then light bursts forth. 2 Cor 4:6; Gen 1:3
4. Men then walk in the light as Christ is in the light. 1 John 1:7; Gen

If the *dawn* Sabbath is applied there is no longer a parallel between the sequence of the gospel and the sequence of the Sabbath in night and day.

## The Midnight Cry

Another line of thought is that Adventism came to light through the true midnight cry of the seventh month movement. The cry that came at midnight was calculated using the day-to-year principle. Samuel Snow first presented his views concerning Oct 22, 1844 on July 21, 1844. This was exactly 3 months after the beginning of the Jewish year which began April 20, 1844.



If we follow the dawn start for the day then it becomes the midday cry and not the midnight cry and this destroys the foundations of Adventism. As the angel told Ellen White.

At this I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path. They had a bright light set up behind them at the beginning of the path, which an angel told me was the midnight cry. EW 14

The midnight cry is the prophetic framework of William Miller built on the year day principle and using the night as the first part of the day to lock in the timing for the midnight cry.

## Egyptians Began Day at Dawn

It is worthy to note that the Egyptians began their day at dawn rather than sunrise.

A hallmark of almost every known culture is some system to track the passing of time. It is thought that, like most agricultural societies, the ancient Egyptians originally organized their calendar according to the cycles of the moon and the agricultural seasons (30.4.2). **Most scholars agree that the Egyptian day began at dawn, before the rising of the sun, rather than sunrise.** The daily cycle was divided into twenty-four hours: twelve hours of the day and twelve hours of the night, the latter apparently reckoned based on the movement of groups of stars (“decans”) across the night sky.

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/tell/hd\\_tell.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/tell/hd_tell.htm)

This point is not conclusive but in light of all the other data it does suggest that practice of observing a dawn beginning to the day is Egyptian and not Hebrew or Christian.

## Spirit of Prophecy Witness

The Spirit of Prophecy has many statements indicating the Sabbath starting at sunset in the local environment of the worshippers. All of this counsel is destroyed by the dawn Sabbath theory.

The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment. **Before the setting of the sun**, let all secular work be laid aside, and all secular papers be put out of sight. Parents, explain your work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to **keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.** {CG 528.2}

**Before the setting of the sun**, let the members of the family assemble to read God's Word, to sing and pray. There is need of reform here, for many have been remiss. We need to confess to God and to one another. We should begin anew to make special arrangements that every member of the family may be **prepared to honor the day which God has**

**blessed and sanctified.** 6T 356

At last Jesus was at rest. The long day of shame and torture was ended. **As the last rays of the setting sun ushered in the Sabbath, the Son of God lay in quietude in Joseph's tomb.** His work completed, His hands folded in peace, He rested through the sacred hours of the Sabbath day. {DA 769.1}

**The night of the first day of the week had worn slowly away.** The darkest hour, just before daybreak, had come. Christ was still a prisoner in His narrow tomb. The great stone was in its place; the Roman seal was unbroken; the Roman guards were keeping their watch. DA 780.2

**The Sabbath was now drawing on,** and it would be a violation of its sanctity for the bodies to hang upon the cross. So, using this as a pretext, the leading Jews requested Pilate that the death of the victims might be hastened, and their bodies be removed **before the setting of the sun.** {DA 771.2}

That was a never-to-be-forgotten Sabbath to the sorrowing disciples, and also to the priests, rulers, scribes, and people. **At the setting of the sun on the evening of the preparation day the trumpets sounded, signifying that the Sabbath had begun.** DA 775

I am thankful for the witness of the Spirit of prophecy concerning the Sabbath. I am also glad that Ellen White was sent to Australia in the 1890's because it shows us how she kept the Sabbath when moving across the date line. She kept the Sabbath from the *even to even* that occurred in the country where she was residing. It has been suggested that because Ellen White did not receive clearer light regarding the feasts that she did not understand the Sabbath correctly either. The Seventh day Sabbath is the source and thus central to the Seventh-day Adventist movement. The feasts are an expansion of this process and we see how the feasts support the Sabbath by indicating when the Sabbath is to be kept – from even to even. **If the Sabbath is kept from dawn to dawn and Passover and Yom Kippur from even to even then it destroys the Divine Pattern between the Sabbath and the feasts.** The divine pattern of Father and Son is the basis of true Sabbath and feast observance. It is at the very heart of the message I have been given to bear in regard to how we approach the festivals.

We see then that the dawn Sabbath teaching does several things.

1. It rejects the clear testimony of Scripture. Here are a few examples.
  - a. It has Christ rising before the third day
  - b. It opens the door for long age theories through ignoring the creation of the formless earth and the waters on the earth before light was created.
  - c. It rejects the timing of shutting the gates in Jerusalem and the temple. Neh 13:19; Ezek 46:2
  - d. It breaks the link between the Sabbath and the Gospel sequence. Heb 4:2-4; Ezek 20:12
2. It undermines the Gospel in creation and breaks the link between the Sabbath and the gospel.
3. It destroys the framework of the conflict over the character of God.
4. It destroys confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy as reflected in several statements and especially in Desire of Ages. It also ignores the words of the angel who quotes to Ellen White Lev 23:32 concerning the Sabbath.
5. It destroys the foundations of Adventism in the Midnight cry.
6. It breaks the Divine Pattern between the Sabbath and the feasts thus undermining one of the strongest evidences for the feasts.
7. It undermines confidence in the Adventist pioneers attributing to them carelessness in studying the Sabbath question.
8. It ignores the witness of history in Josephus.

I invite you to read carefully this study by J.N. Andrews regarding the time to commence the Sabbath. The Lord did not leave such an important detail to languish for over a century to determine this question. The evidence of Scripture is clear and convincing that the time to commence the Sabbath is the evening and that evening in Scripture means sunset.

Adrian Ebens.

# **Time to Commence the Sabbath**

Review and Herald December 4, 1855

J.N. Andrews

In determining this question, it is evident that much weight should be attached to the manner in which the Creator regulated the commencement of the day in the beginning. For at the same time at which the first day of time began, there also would it end; and where the first day of time began and ended, there also would the second day begin and end; and so of the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh day. And where the days of the first week began and ended, there would also the days of all succeeding weeks begin and end. Hence the importance of determining, as nearly as possible, the time at which the day commenced in the Creation week.

## **Evening and Morning**

What are we to understand by the word day in the first chapter of Genesis? I answer that it is used with two significations. First, it is used by God in giving name to the light, as distinguished from the darkness which was called night. In other words it is applied to that part of the 24 hours which is light. Second, it is used in naming the seventh part of the week, or the entire period of 24 hours. Verse 5 presents an instance in which it is used in each of these senses. "And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night: and the evening and the morning were the first day." It is with the second definition, or use of the word day, that we are now interested.

But here some will meet us with the denial that the word day is used for a period of 24 hours, or in other words, that the night is ever in the Scriptures included in the day. It is proper that that point should be briefly noticed. It is said in Ex.20:11, that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth." This establishes the fact that the six days began with the act of creation: or, to use a different expression, the first day of the week began with God's act of forming heaven and earth. Now it was profound darkness until after the Spirit of God had moved upon the waters. The next act of the Lord was the creation of light. Then having divided the light from the darkness he designates the one as day, and the other as night. This is a demonstration that night was the first division of the first day, and consequently, if the

divine order were followed, the first division of all subsequent days. That the force of this argument may appear, we present the first five verses of Genesis.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."

## **Defining the Word *Day***

Dr. Clarke, in his note on Matt.28:1, states that in Hebrew the same word signifies both evening and night. He cites Gen.1:5, as an instance of its use in this manner. Hence it appears that the expression, "the evening and the morning were the first day," is the same as though it said, "the night and the morning were the first day." This is a very important fact: for it clearly proves that the night is reckoned, not only as a part of the day of 24 hours, but as forming its first division. Let it be remembered that by the word day as here used I mean one of the seven periods that make up the week. It is worthy of notice that each of the days upon which God wrought in the work of creation, is represented as constituted of the same grand divisions as the first. Thus it is said: Verse 8. "And God called the firmament heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day." Verse 13. "And the evening and the morning were the third day." Verse 19. "And the evening and the morning were the fourth day." Verse 23. "And the evening and the morning were the fifth day." Verse 31. "And God saw every thing that he had made, and beheld, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." It is also to be noticed that even the 2300 days are thus constituted. They are 2300 literal days, symbolizing 2300 years. The margin, which gives the literal Hebrew, calls each of these days, an "evening morning."

The law of Moses bears direct testimony on the point before us. Or rather it may be said to determine in an authoritative manner, the fact that the night is a part of the day, and that the day begins with the evening.

Lev 23:32. It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your



souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

This text defines the tenth day of the seventh month; and in so doing it also defines the other days of that month, and as a consequence, of all other months. It tells us that the tenth day of the seventh month begins with the evening at the close of the ninth day, and that it extends until the next evening. No one can set aside this testimony. In accordance with this fact we read that the Jews, on the afternoon of the day of preparation, wished to have the legs of those who were crucified broken, that they might not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath. John 19:31. And also that at the time when Jesus was taken down from the cross, on the afternoon of that day, "the Sabbath drew on." Luke 23:54. It is also said:

John 19:41,42 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

The idea is evidently this: that they buried our Lord in a sepulchre nigh at hand, that they might accomplish his burial on the preparation-day, and before the Sabbath commenced.

In addition to the foregoing, it may not be improper to present several instances in which the night is reckoned as a part of the day, or as included in the day. We call attention to the following:

1 Sam.26:7,8. "So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and behold Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him. Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now, therefore, let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time."

Here the night is certainly included in the day. The same fact will appear from Ex 12:41,42:

And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord

for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.

We present also the words of the angel, addressed to the shepherds of Bethlehem.

Luke 2:8-11. "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

In these words the angel certainly recognizes the night as a part of the day. Last of all we present the words of the Lord Jesus.

Mark 14:30. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, **That this day even in this night**, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

Also Luke 22:34:

And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

With these words of our Lord, the argument that the days of the week begin with the evening, and that they include the whole 24 hours, may be properly closed. It remains to notice one or two objections to what has been already adduced.

## Responding to Matt 28:1 and Day at Sunrise

It is objected that the day, according to Matt.28:1 begins at sunrise. It reads as follows: "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre." But an inference drawn from this text cannot be sufficient to destroy the direct testimony already presented, that the day begins with evening. But by turning to John 20:1, we shall find that this inference is inadmissible. "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the

sepulchre." In this text it is plainly stated that those who came to the sepulchre "when it was yet dark," came upon the first day of the week. This is direct evidence that the first day of the week includes at least a part of the night which follows the Sabbath. The note of Dr. Clarke on Matt 28:1 contains the following words:

In the end of the Sabbath.] Opse de sabbaton. After the end of the week; this is the translation given by several eminent critics; and in this way the word opse is used by the most eminent Greek writers. Matthew, therefore states that the women came to the sepulchre after the Sabbath, early upon the first day of the week.

The creation of the sun at the commencement of the fourth day, is supposed to prove that the day should begin with sunrise, or as others suppose, at noon. We quote the words of Moses: Gen.1:14-18. "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; let them be for signs, and for season, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good." Those who argue thus, contend that at creation the sun should be just rising, or as others say should be first seen in mid-heaven. But all such reasoning is fallacious. For at the moment when the sun first appeared in the heavens, from the most eastern point at which it could be seen, it would be just rising above the horizon. Hence it is not unreasonable to conclude that at that place in the East, (perhaps the garden of Eden,) where day begins the circuit of the globe, the sun at its creation, was just setting. This gives us a harmonious view of the Creator's work. It began each day with evening; and as it thus began on the fourth day, the sun when first seen was just setting; and as it continued its course westward, it carried sunset with it around the globe. And this view that the day begins in the East, and so travels round the world, is of great importance. It takes away the objection that we cannot keep the Sabbath unless we live in Palestine; for we keep the day as it comes to us; and as the Sabbath makes the circuit of the globe, all the human family have the privilege of observing the Rest-day of the Creator.

## When Exactly is Evening?

We think the Scripture testimony adduced, sufficient to establish the fact that the day begins with the evening. The next inquiry therefore properly relates to the commencement of evening. What is the testimony of the Bible on this? Moses thus defines the commencement of evening.

Deut 16:6. "But at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover **at even, at the going down of the sun**, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt."

This text seems to settle the question that evening is at sunset. But Ex 12:6, may be supposed to modify the text just quoted. It reads thus:

Ex 12:6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

The margins reads, "between the two evenings." This purports to be the literal Hebrew, and is therefore entitled to respect. It is said, that "between the two evenings" is at 3 o'clock P. M. If this is correct, it shows that the "going down of the sun," in Deut 16:6, is an indefinite expression. But Gesenius, in his Hebrew Lexicon, says that between the two evenings, according to the "best supported" opinion, "was the interval between sunset and dark." If this be correct - and there is certainly no higher uninspired authority than Gesenius - it removes the apparent contradiction between Ex 12 and Deut 16, and shows that they both agree on sunset. Greenfield, in his New Testament Lexicon, says that two evenings "were reckoned by the Hebrews; one from the ninth hour, (3 o'clock,) until sunset; and the other, from sunset until dark. Robinson's Lexicon of the New Testament says the same. This would agree very nearly with Gesenius.

We next introduce:

Lev 22:6,7 The soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water. And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things, because it is his food.

This text seems to need no comment. Even seems to be clearly defined "at

sunset." The person who was unclean until even, was clean at sunset. See also Deut 22:11; 24:13,15.

The following text seems to teach the same thing:

Josh.8:29. "And the king of Ai he hanged **on a tree until even-tide: and as soon as the sun was down**, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcass down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day."

Josh 10:26,27 defines evening in the same manner.

Josh 10:26,27 And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the five trees until the evening. And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, which remain until this very day.

See also Judges 14:18; 2 Sam 3:35. Evening is also defined in 2 Chron 18:34:

"And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the even; and about the time of the sun going down he died."

The New Testament defines evening at sunset in two places. Three of the evangelists mention the same fact; two of them stating that it occurred at evening, and two of them that it was at sunset.

Matt 8:16. **When the even was come**, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick.

Mark 1:32. **And at even**, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

Luke 4:40. **Now when the sun was setting**, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

From Mark 1 it appears that this transaction occurred at the even which

follows the Sabbath. Hence the reason is plain why they waited till sunset before bringing out the sick; viz., they waited for the close of the Sabbath.

The following scripture is supposed to prove that the day at some seasons of the year does not commence until after the setting of the sun.

Neh 13:19. "And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath; and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the Sabbath day.

Perhaps this arises from a careless method of reading the text. It does not say, "when it began to be dark at Jerusalem;" but it says "when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark." Now the meaning of this I think is simply that toward sunset the gates on their east side would begin to be dark, and that at that time they should be closed so that everything would be quiet when the Sabbath should commence. This view seems to me reasonable, and it harmonizes the text with all the other testimony presented.

## **The Division of 12 Hours in a Day**

The parable in Matt.20:1-12 has been adduced to prove that the day begins at 6 o'clock. It is as follows:

"For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market-place, and said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first

came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house, saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

The argument drawn from this text is this: there are twelve hours in the day; that the third hour is nine o'clock; that the sixth hour is noon; that the ninth hour is three o'clock; that the eleventh hour is five o'clock; and that from this time until evening it was but one hour. Hence evening comes at six o'clock. **The defects in the foregoing argument are these: 1st. The hours in the New Testament are not the same as our hours. With us an hour is 60 minutes, and is never more nor less. But in the New Testament it is the twelfth part of the space between sunrise and sunset.** Consequently the hours were longer or shorter according to the season of the year. It is true that the sixth hour being the middle of the day would always come at twelve o'clock; but the twelfth hour, or evening, would always come at sunset. 2nd, The division of the day into hours was not of divine appointment, but originated with the heathen!!!

The same argument has been drawn from John 11:9. "Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world." It is said that if there are twelve hours in the day, then the sixth hour of the day is noon; and as there would be six hours either side of noon, or twelve o'clock, it follows that the day of twelve hours begins at six in the morning, and ends at six in the evening; and that a day of 24 hours would of course begin and end at six in the evening. This argument would be conclusive if the premises were sound. The same defect exists in this as in the argument drawn from Matt.20; viz., that the hours were not sixty minutes like ours; but were the twelfth part of the time between sunrise and sunset. Hence the hours were constantly varying in length, but evening would be invariably at sunset. Consequently Matt.20:1-12, and John 11:9, do not conflict with the testimony presented that the day begins at sunset. It will be expected that we prove the point that the hours were the twelfth part of the space between sunrise and sunset. This we shall now do.

## **An Hour is 1/12 of Daylight and not 60 Minutes**

The Jews reckoned twelve hours in the day, and of course each hour of

the day, thus reckoned, must have been something longer or shorter, according to the different times of the year in that climate. - *Part of Clarke's note on John 1:39.*

The Jews, as well as most other nations, divided the day from sunrising to sunset, into twelve equal parts; but these parts or hours, were longer or shorter, according to the different seasons of the year. - *Part of Clarke's note on John 11:9.*

The Jews (by a reckoning adopted from the Greeks) divided their day, or the time from sunrise to sunset, into twelve hours, of course varying a little according to the season of the year. - [*Bloomfield's note on John 11:9.*

HOURL. - In the books of the New Testament we see clearly the day divided into twelve equal hours, after the manner of the Greeks and Romans. These hours were equal to each other, but unequal with respect to the different seasons. The twelve hours of the longest days in Summer were much longer than those of the shortest days in Winter. - *Cruden*

DAY. - The sacred writers generally divide the day and night into twelve unequal hours. The sixth hour is always noon throughout the year; and the twelfth hour is the last hour of the day. But in Summer, the twelfth hour, as all the others were, was longer than in Winter. - *Ency. Religious Knowledge.*

The day was divided into twelve hours, which, of course, varied in length, being shorter in Winter and longer in Summer. - *Watson's Biblical and Theological Dictionary.*

The Jews divided the space from sunrise to sunset, were the days longer or shorter, into twelve parts; so that the hours of their day were all the year the same in number, though much shorter in Winter than in Summer. - *Note of the Cottage Bible on John 11:9.*

"The Jews reckoned their days from evening to evening, according to the order which is mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis, in the account of the work of creation: The evening and the morning were the first day. Their Sabbath, therefore, or seventh day, began at sunset on the day we call Friday, and lasted until the same time on the day



following. When our Saviour was in Capernaum, it was thought wrong to bring the sick to him to be healed, while the Sabbath lasted; 'but at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils: and all the city was gathered together at the door.' Mark 1:21-35. The time between the rising and the setting of the sun was divided into twelve equal parts, which were called hours. John 11:9. As this period of time, however, is longer at one season of the year than at another, it is plain that the hours would also be of different lengths at different times. In Winter they were, of course, shorter than in Summer. They were numbered from the rising of the sun, and not from the middle of the day, as is common with us. Hours are not mentioned till after the captivity; it is reasonable, therefore, to suppose that the Jews borrowed their mode of dividing time from the Chaldeans, from whom also it passed to the Greeks and Romans." - *Nevin's Biblical Antiquities*, pp. 171,172.

The word hour, in Scripture, signifies one of the twelve equal parts into which each day was divided, and which, of course, were of different lengths at different seasons of the year. This mode of dividing the day prevailed among the Jews, at least after the exile in Babylon, and perhaps earlier. - *Covel's Bible Dictionary*.

An hour, one of the twelve equal parts into which the day was divided, and which of course were different at different seasons of the year. - *Greenfield's New Testament Lexicon*.

In New Testament an hour, one of the twelve equal parts into which the natural day and also the night were divided, and which of course were of different lengths at different seasons of the year; probably introduced by astronomers, and first so used by Hipparchus about B. C. 140. - *Robinson's Lexicon of the New Testament*.

These testimonies are amply sufficient to establish the fact that the hours of the New Testament do not correspond to hours measured by a clock. And that they were the twelfth part of the space from sunrise to sunset. Hence no argument can be drawn from Matt.20:1-12; John 11:9, which is not in perfect accordance with the testimony already presented that even, with which day commences, is at sunset.

## **Sabbath Cannot Commence at 6pm**

A most important consideration is this; if the Sabbath commences at six o'clock, no one can tell when that hour arrives unless they have a clock or watch. Now these were not invented until about 1658. See Putnam's Hand Book of Useful Arts. So that for nearly, the whole space of 6000 years the people of God have been without the means of telling when the Sabbath commenced. But such a conclusion would be a manifest absurdity. And we have already seen that there is not a single testimony of Holy Scripture that can be adduced for the six o'clock time. We conclude this article by summing up the argument as follows:

1. There is no Scriptural argument in support of six o'clock, as the hour with which evening commences.
2. If that is the hour, the people of God for about 5,600 years were unable to tell when the Sabbath commenced.
3. The Bible, by several plain statements, establishes the fact that evening is at sunset.

J. N. Andrews.

TO THE BRETHREN:- The subject presented in the above article, is one of great importance. The testimony of the Bible relative to the time of commencing the Sabbath is here brought together, that it may speak for itself. The result of the investigation is the firm conviction that the commencement and close of each day is marked by the setting of the sun. It will be asked why this conclusion was not earlier arrived at? The answer is this: the subject has not been hitherto thoroughly investigated. In making this statement I would frankly acknowledge my own fault. It is always duty to correct our errors when we see them; and, however, sincerely we may have acted in the past, we can no longer act so, if when we see a fault as such, or a mistake that we refuse to acknowledge it.

It may be proper to state the circumstances under which the above article was written. Last August, (1855) brother White and other brethren requested me to give the subject a thorough investigation. This I immediately endeavored to do, devoting to the subject each day, as much time as my strength would admit. In a short time I became entirely satisfied that the

unanimous testimony of the Scriptures is, that each day commences with the setting of the sun. The Seventh-day Baptists have always held to this doctrine, but I have never happened to meet with their views. Had I done so, I should not have remained in error on this subject. But it will be asked, Did you not learn the truth from the *Messenger*? [A periodical from the time] I answer, No. The article here presented was written several weeks before the M. had published anything on the point. I can have no fellowship for a sheet conducted in the manner that the M. has hitherto been. But the testimony of the Bible is equally precious though it may have been presented for the purpose of envy or strife. Besides this, as I now learn a considerable number of our brethren have long been convinced that the Sabbath commences at sunset. J. N. A. Battle Creek, Mich., Nov. 12th, 1855.

## Time of the Sabbath.

EQUATORIAL time, or from six o'clock to six o'clock, has been observed by the body of Sabbath-keepers. The truth is, the subject has not been fully investigated till within a few months. We have never been fully satisfied with the testimony presented in favor of six o'clock. While the various communications received for a few years past, advocating both sun-rise and sunset time, have been almost destitute of argument, and the spirit of humility and candor. The subject has troubled us, yet we have never found time to thoroughly investigate it.

In June, 1854, we urged Eld. D. P. Hall to prepare an article on the subject for the REVIEW. When with him in Penn. last Winter we repeated the request. When in Maine last Summer we stated our feelings on the subject to Bro. Andrews, and our fears of division unless the question could be settled by good testimony. He decided to devote his time to the subject till he ascertained what the Bible taught in regard to it, and his article in this No. is the result of his investigations. Some have the impression that six o'clock time has been taught among us by the direct manifestation of the Holy Spirit. This is a mistake. "From even to even," was the teaching, from which six o'clock time has been inferred. **We now rejoice that Bro. Andrews has presented the Bible testimony on this question, in his accustomed forcible, candid manner, which settles the question beyond all doubt that the Sabbath commences not only at even, but at the setting of the sun.**

James White.

## The Lunar Sabbath

This theory has grown considerably over the past few years. If you are unfamiliar with the lunar sabbath hypothesis, in layman's terms, the sabbath is calculated on a lunar-based shifting cycle instead of every 7th day. With each sighting of the new moon the calendar is reset and a new month begins. New moon day is a sabbath for some and also becomes the first day of the month. Seven days after the sighting of the new moon is the first sabbath of the month, so that they always fall on the 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th day of the month, which corresponds to the quarters of the moon. With this pattern the sabbaths can fall on any day of the week on the Gregorian calendar from Sunday to Saturday. Any days after the 29th without a new moon are not recognized, so the sabbath is not perpetually every 7th day.

## The Continuous Seven Day Cycle

While the history of the Lunar Sabbath's development is curious there is one main point that easily proves the falseness of this idea, the continuous seven day cycle.

Exodus 16:23-29 And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. (24) And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. (25) And Moses said, Eat that to day; for to day is a sabbath unto the LORD: to day ye shall not find it in the field. (26) **Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.** (27) And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. (28) And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? (29) **See, for that the LORD hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.**

The Lord commanded the Israelites to gather manna for six days. In the sixth

day they were to gather a double portion.

Every week during their long sojourn in the wilderness the Israelites witnessed a threefold miracle, designed to impress their minds with the sacredness of the Sabbath: **a double quantity of manna fell on the sixth day, none on the seventh, and the portion needed for the Sabbath was preserved sweet and pure**, when if any were kept over at any other time it became unfit for use. In the circumstances connected with the giving of the manna, we have conclusive evidence that the Sabbath was not instituted, as many claim, when the law was given at Sinai. Before the Israelites came to Sinai they understood the Sabbath to be obligatory upon them. **In being obliged to gather every Friday a double portion of manna in preparation for the Sabbath, when none would fall, the sacred nature of the day of rest was continually impressed upon them.** Patriarchs and Prophets p. 296.2-3

And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year. Joshua 5:12

This manna cycle continued for 40 years to establish in the minds of the children of Israel the timing of the Sabbath. The double portion came every Friday and none came on the Sabbath. This simply validates the truth that Sabbath observance was a memorial of the creation of the world in six days and the rest of God on the seventh day.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. (9) Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: (10) But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: **For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day:** wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. Exodus 20:8-11

The fourth commandment makes no mention of the moon as a requirement for calculating the Sabbath. It presents only a seven day continuous cycle. The Spirit of Prophecy is plain about the continuation of the seven day cycle.

Like the Sabbath, the week originated at creation, and it has been preserved and brought down to us through Bible history. **God Himself measured off the first week as a sample for successive weeks to the close of time. Like every other, it consisted of seven literal days. Six days were employed in the work of creation; upon the seventh, God rested,** and He then blessed this day and set it apart as a day of rest for man. Patriarchs and Prophets p. 111.1

Another simple proof of the seven day cycle is the calculation for Pentecost.

And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: (16) **Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days;** and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD. Leviticus 23:15-16

The Lunar Sabbath calculation places the Sabbath on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> day of the month. This leaves one or two days extra in any given month as months are calculated as either 29 or 30 days between new moons. This makes the Pentecost calculation impossible to be completed within 50 days. In the Lunar Sabbath calculation there can never be a period of only 50 days. It must be a minimum of 51 days thus making the calculation in Leviticus 23:15-16 impossible. Once again, the calculation of Pentecost can only work when you have a continuous seven cycle.

## **Babylonian Origin of Lunar Sabbath**

We might also mention the fact that the practice of counting every seventh day from the new moon as holy is a Babylonian practice.

Counting from the new moon, the Babylonians celebrated every seventh day as a “holy-day”, also called an “evil-day” (meaning “unsuitable” for prohibited activities). On these days officials were prohibited from various activities and common men were forbidden to “make a wish”, and the 28th was known as a “rest-day”.

[https://shirleytwofeathers.com/The\\_Blog/pagancalendar/category/babylonian-festivals/](https://shirleytwofeathers.com/The_Blog/pagancalendar/category/babylonian-festivals/)

This practice of counting Sabbaths from the New Moon was combined with starting the Babylonian year on the first new moon after the vernal equinox.

**The earliest recorded New Year's festivity dates back some 4,000 years to ancient Babylon, and was deeply intertwined with religion and mythology. For the Babylonians of ancient Mesopotamia, the first new moon following the vernal equinox—the day in late March with an equal amount of sunlight and darkness—**heralded the start of a new year and represented the rebirth of the natural world. They marked the occasion with a massive religious festival called Akitu (derived from the Sumerian word for barley, which was cut in the spring) that involved a different ritual on each of its 11 days. During the Akitu, statues of the gods were paraded through the city streets, and rites were enacted to symbolize their victory over the forces of chaos. Through these rituals the Babylonians believed the world was symbolically cleansed and recreated by the gods in preparation for the new year and the return of spring. <https://www.ancient-origins.net/myths-legends-important-events/ancient-origins-new-year-s-celebrations-001181>

Thus we see that both the Lunar Sabbath and the first new moon after vernal equinox are ideas that spring from Babylonian pagan origins.

## **The Gregorian Calendar**

Every person that has approached me in regard to the Lunar Sabbath has spoken of the falsity and obvious pagan origins of the Gregorian calendar. This argument fails to grasp the reality that the continuous seven day cycle is completely independent of any annual calendar. It has no bearing on it whatsoever.

The Lunar Sabbath makes use of a text in Psalms to prove that all of God's appointments must be calculated with the moon.

Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day. Psalm 81:3

The answer to this is found in the very next verse

**For this was a statute for Israel**, and a law of the God of Jacob. Psalm 81:4

The word *statute* occurs 35 times in the Bible. It never refers to the seventh-day Sabbath. The word *statute* is used in relation to the feasts but never the weekly Sabbath.

This validates the principle of the Divine Pattern. For those unfamiliar with the Divine Pattern please read *The Divine Pattern of Life* found on the website at maranathamedia.com.

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, [appointments] and for days, and years: Genesis 1:14

The weekly Sabbath is the source of the appointments of our Father. The Feasts are a channel. The weekly Sabbath is governed by the greater light and the feasts are governed by the lesser light in conjunction with the greater light. In order to keep Passover you count until the 14<sup>th</sup> day [the sun] of the first month [the moon]. If we use the moon as the light that determines the Sabbath then the moon takes a higher position than the sun. Once again the Spirit of Prophecy confirms that only the Sun is used to calculate the weekly Sabbath.

All those who hold the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end **will keep the seventh-day Sabbath, which comes to us as marked by the sun.** *Selected Messages volume 3* p. 318.5

I would like to add a few more statements from the Spirit of Prophecy that speak directly to when the Sabbath is to be observed. These statements not only address the falsity of the Lunar Sabbath but of any theory that would deviate from sunset to sunset on the seventh day in the location you are living.

God rested on the seventh day, and set it apart for man to observe in honor of His creation of the heavens and the earth in six literal days. He



blessed and sanctified and made holy the day of rest. **When men are so careful to search and dig to see in regard to the precise period of time, we are to say, God made His Sabbath for a round world; and when the seventh day comes to us in that round world, controlled by the sun that rules the day, it is the time in all countries and lands to observe the Sabbath.** In the countries where there is no sunset for months, and again no sunrise for months, the period of time will be calculated by records kept. . . . The Lord accepts all the obedience of every creature He has made, **according to the circumstances of time in the sun-rising and sun-setting world.** . . . The Sabbath was made for a round world, and therefore obedience is required of the people that are in perfect consistency with the Lord's created world.--Letter 167, 1900. *Selected Messages volume 3* p. 317.1

The statement clearly states that we are to keep the Sabbath on the seventh day when the sun comes to us in that world. It also states that the Sabbath is observed by the control of the sun not the sun and the moon. Simply stated, when the sun sets on the sixth day in the location you are living, this is the time to commence the Sabbath.

## **We Know Where We Stand**

The idea has been advanced that Ellen White was told that there was further light to be given in regard to the Sabbath. We addressed this on page 9 of this booklet:

I inquired why it had been thus, that at this late day we must change the time of commencing the Sabbath. Said the angel, "Ye shall understand, but not yet, not yet. 1T 116

As we indicated, Ellen White did not understand why they needed to change from 6pm to 6pm for the Sabbath to sunset to sunset. The idea that the Sabbath would change from sunset to sunset because the pioneers still did not understand the Sabbath is proved false by the plain reading of the statement as well as the following.

Is it possible that so much importance can be clustered about those who observe the Sabbath, and yet no one can tell when the Sabbath comes?

Then where is the people who bear the badge or the sign of God? What is the sign?

The Seventh-day Sabbath, which the Lord blessed and sanctified, and pronounced holy, with great penalties for its violation.

**The seventh-day Sabbath is in no uncertainty.** It is God's memorial of His work of Creation. It is set up as a Heaven-given memorial, to be observed as a sign of obedience. God wrote the whole law with His finger on two tables of stone. . . .

Now, my sister, although I am at present sick, I write sitting up in bed to tell you that we are not to give the least credence to the day-line theory. It is a snare of Satan brought in by his own agents to confuse minds. You see how utterly impossible for this thing to be, that the world is all right observing Sunday, and God's remnant people are all wrong. **This theory of the day line would make all our history for the past fifty-five years a complete fallacy. But we know where we stand. . . .**

My sister, let not your faith fail. We are to stand fast by our colors, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. **All those who hold the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end will keep the seventh-day Sabbath, which comes to us as marked by the sun.** The fallacy of the day line is a trap of Satan to discourage. I know what I am speaking about. Have faith in God. Shine where you are, as a living stone in God's building.

The children of God will be triumphant. They will come off conquerors and more than conquerors over all the opposing, persecuting elements. Fear not. By the power of Bible truth and love exemplified in the cross, and set home by the Holy Spirit, we shall have the victory. The whole battle before us hinges upon the observance of the true Sabbath of Jehovah. . . .

I can write no more now, but I say, Give no ear to heresy. Cling to a plain "Thus saith the Lord." He will comfort and bless you, and will give you joy in your heart. Praise the Lord that we have clear light, and a plain, distinct message to bear.--Letter 118, 1900, pp. 1, 2, 5-7. (To Sister Hall, Aug. 2, 1900.) *Manuscript Release Volume 3* pp. 254-256

Ellen White was clear where she stood. She did not show any uncertainty

about when the Sabbath is. She did not say that she was waiting for further light on this question. Her statements can't be misunderstood.

The theory of the day line was to move the change of the day on the earth (the international date line) to the place where Eden was supposed to be located. The most obvious impact of this is to place the keeping of the Sabbath in Australia after the keeping of the Sabbath in Europe and the USA. This would place the keeping of the Sabbath on Sunday in Australia. The Spirit of Prophecy shows this to be false.

## **From Sunset to Sunset in Your Location**

One of the clearest reasons Ellen White was not in doubt was what the angel showed her very early in the Adventist movement. James White records the event.

1. Mrs. White has in two visions been shown something in regard to the time of the commencement of the Sabbath. The first was as early as 1847, at Topsham, Me. **In the vision she was shown that to commence the Sabbath at sunrise was wrong. She then heard an angel repeat these words, "From even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbaths."** RH Feb 25, 1868

While Ellen White is living in the United States she was told from even to even you shall celebrate your Sabbaths. There is no indication to suggest this *even to even* was anywhere other than the United States. Therefore *the even to even* was sunset to sunset in the United States. When Ellen White crossed the Pacific Ocean and kept Sabbath in Australia she kept it from sunset to sunset in that location.

There are some who take the statement of the angel that she would understand but not yet to mean that she would understand the truth about the Sabbath but not yet.

I inquired why it had been thus, that at this late day we must change the time of commencing the Sabbath. Said the angel, "Ye shall understand, but not yet, not yet." 1T 116

The statement clearly indicates what was not understood. It was the reason they had to change the time at this late stage. If the above statement means that they didn't understand the timing of the Sabbath yet then the angel did not tell the truth to Ellen White that she herself would understand it in the future. Ellen White died keeping Sabbath from sunset to sunset in every place she went across the earth. So it can't mean she didn't understand the timing of the Sabbath after November 1855. She did not understand the reason for why they had to change in 1855 but she did understand later as James White explained in 1868.

But the question naturally arises, If the visions are given to correct the erring, why did she not sooner see the error of the six o'clock time? It does not appear to be the design of the Lord to teach his people by the gifts of the Spirit on Bible questions until his servants have diligently searched his word. RH Feb 25, 1868

Another reason that Sabbath must be from sunset to sunset in the location where you dwell is that we have no record of Paul on his missionary journeys or the Waldenses keeping a Sabbath based on Jerusalem sunset time. The Waldenses lived in Europe and their timing for Sabbath was one or two hours different. Ellen White says they kept the true Sabbath.

**The Waldenses were the first of all the peoples of Europe to obtain a translation of the Holy Scriptures.** Hundreds of years before the Reformation, they possessed the Bible in manuscript in their native tongue. They had the truth unadulterated, and this rendered them the special objects of hatred and persecution. They declared the Church of Rome to be the apostate Babylon of the Apocalypse, and at the peril of their lives they stood up to resist her corruptions. While, under the pressure of long-continued persecution, some compromised their faith, little by little yielding its distinctive principles, others held fast the truth. Through ages of darkness and apostasy, there were Waldenses who denied the supremacy of Rome, who rejected image worship as idolatry, and **who kept the true Sabbath.** Under the fiercest tempests of opposition they maintained their faith. Though gashed by the Savoyard spear, and scorched by the Romish fagot, they stood unflinchingly for God's Word and his honor. {GC 65.1}

It is also evident from the Jews who are spread across the world, they all keep the Sabbath from sunset to sunset. There is no recorded dispute in Scripture about timing the Sabbath according to Jerusalem time when outside of Israel.

The Celtic Church in Britain, by Leslie Hardinge, is a well-documented 265-page book, which shows that Christians in the British Isles almost exclusively kept the seventh day Sabbath for six hundred years after the Messiah. **They kept the Sabbath from sundown to sundown, were known to be Quartodecimans** (kept annual Passover on fourteenth day of the Hebrew month), eschewed unclean meats, and were not trinitarians. St. Patrick of Ireland was not a Catholic, but a Sabbath-keeper who stressed keeping the Law of God.

<http://www.biblesabbath.org/descrmat.html>

As we have shown previously, the Bible defines the word *day* as a night and a day of approximately 24 hours. The fourth commandment tells us to remember the Sabbath *day*. The word *day* means sunset to sunset where you are located.

Now, according to the Bible, when does the day begin? Lev. 23:27 says: "On the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement." Verse 32: "It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest; . . . in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath." Deut. 16:6. "At even at the going down of the sun." So, then, the tenth day of the month was from sundown on the ninth day till sundown on the tenth day. **In other words sunset marks the beginning of a new day. This is strictly according to the order of God at the creation. Gen. 1:2:** "And the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep." So far all was darkness. "And God said, Let there be light; and there was light." God "commanded the light to shine out of darkness." 2 Cor. 4:6. Thus darkness being upon the earth and light following, darkness is naturally the first part of the day. "And the evening [darkness] and the morning, [light] were the first day." Gen. 1:5. *A.T Jones, Signs of the Times December 11, 1884*

If this command relates to only one location on the earth and that being Jerusalem then for those living in Australia the Sabbath would be from 2am Sabbath morning until 2am Sunday morning. On the east coast of the USA it would be 1pm on Friday until 1pm on Sabbath afternoon. If this were the case it would change the definition of the word *day*. This simply can't be the case. There is no evidence or history that any such observance has been commanded or observed on the earth. God made His Sabbath for a round world. It is observed when the *day* comes to us where we are in that world.

God made His Sabbath for a round world; and **when the seventh day comes to us in that round world, controlled by the sun that rules the day, it is the time in all countries and lands to observe the Sabbath.**  
3SM 317

I speak to all those in the Advent movement. If you doubt or disbelieve the Spirit of prophecy then the following is for you to consider.

I know your danger. If you lose confidence in the testimonies you will drift away from Bible truth. I have been fearful that many would take a questioning, doubting position, and in my distress for your souls I would warn you. How many will heed the warning? As you now hold the testimonies, should one be given crossing your track, correcting your errors, would you feel at perfect liberty to accept or reject any part or the whole? That which you will be least inclined to receive is the very part most needed. God and Satan never work in copartnership. The testimonies either bear the signet of God or that of Satan. A good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. By their fruit ye shall know them. God has spoken. Who has trembled at His word? *Testimonies Volume 5* page 98.

So the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy are clear.

1. The Sabbath comes every seventh day
2. It is controlled by the Sun
3. It commences at sunset on Friday until sunset on Sabbath in the location where you are situated.

Once again we are reminded.

In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. **We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.** Like Sketches p. 196.2

The Lord led our pioneers in the early stages of the movement. The Sabbath question was studied out carefully by J.N. Andrews. He submitted his work to the leadership. The Sabbath from sunset to sunset that came every seventh day was established and Ellen White affirmed that we know where we stand on this question.

I am appealing to all of those in the Father of Love movement to stand on the Bible truth of this question. To deviate in any way from the seventh day Sabbath given to our people in the November of 1855 is to move away from the Bible Sabbath. If you do this you can't receive the seal of God.

The sign, or seal, of God is revealed in the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, the Lord's memorial of creation. . . . 8T 117

I am fully aware this cuts across the ideas of people that I care for and love as brethren. I write these things out of a deep conviction to believe the Bible and Spirit of prophecy that we might receive the seal of God. This is a question of life and death. Thus I appeal to any who hold a different position or are inclined in other directions; you are placing your soul in great danger and will cut off your ability to receive the seal of God.

How precious is the Sabbath given to us in Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy. Take hold of it and be saved.

Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. 2 Chronicles 20:20

## Time to Commence the Sabbath

Mrs. White has in two visions been shown something in regard to the time of the commencement of the Sabbath. The first was as early as 1847, at Topsham, Me. **In the vision she was shown that to commence the Sabbath at sunrise was wrong. She then heard an angel repeat these words, "From even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbaths."**

In the first vision we were directed to the word of God by the words "From even to even;" but on astronomical grounds, it was then decided that even was six o'clock. In the second, exactly the same words were used, and we were more especially directed to the word of God, which when examined conclusively establishes sunset time. This settled the matter with Bro. Bates and a few others, and general harmony has since prevailed on the question. James White, Review and Herald, Feb 25, 1868

It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, **from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.** Leviticus 23:32

But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover **at even, at the going down of the sun,** at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt. Deuteronomy 16:6